

From: [Bowman, Liz](#)
To: [Gray, David](#); [Grantham, Nancy](#); [Kelly, Albert](#); [Abboud, Michael](#); [Wilcox, Jahan](#)
Subject: RE: Baytown Sun - EPA confirms Harvey damage at Waste Pits; orders immediate repairs to cap
Date: Friday, September 29, 2017 9:19:51 AM

Good headline, I am glad we adjusted the language on the release.

From: Gray, David
Sent: Friday, September 29, 2017 8:21 AM
To: Bowman, Liz <Bowman.Liz@epa.gov>; Grantham, Nancy <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>; Kelly, Albert <kelly.albert@epa.gov>; Abboud, Michael <abboud.michael@epa.gov>; Wilcox, Jahan <wilcox.jahan@epa.gov>
Subject: Baytown Sun - EPA confirms Harvey damage at Waste Pits; orders immediate repairs to cap

EPA confirms Harvey damage at Waste Pits; orders immediate repairs to cap



Two more days to send San Jacinto Waste Pits comments to EPA

Posted: Friday, September 29, 2017 12:00 am

The Environmental Protection Agency has directed the potentially responsible parties of the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site to take immediate action to address damage to the protective cap and high-levels of underlying waste material found at one of the samples on site.

EPA received preliminary data from sediment samples collected by EPA's dive team from 14 areas at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site.

Samples from one of the 14 areas confirmed the protective cap had been damaged and the underlying waste material was exposed. The EPA said a sample collected by an agency dive team showed dioxins at 70,000 nanograms per kilogram. The EPA level for cleaning is 30 nanograms per kilogram.

EPA has directed both International Paper and Industrial Maintenance Corporation, the potentially responsible parties (PRPs) for the San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund site in Harris County, to conduct supplemental sampling to ensure that the exposed waste material is isolated. The dioxin in the waste material does not dissolve easily in water but it can migrate further out into the surrounding sediments. The supplemental sampling will determine the extent, if any, of this migration.

Initial repairs have already been taken at the damaged area where the protective rock was missing. If necessary,

EPA will direct additional visual dive operations to check for displacement in the stone cover of the protective cap and more fully evaluate the cap for damage by Hurricane Harvey.

The PRPs developed an Operations, Monitoring, and Maintenance Plan under Federal Order by the EPA and completed work to prevent wastes from continuing to migrate to adjacent areas including the San Jacinto River in July 2011. The Order allows the Agency to require additional measures and investigations deemed necessary by the Agency from its periodic inspection of the protective cap. EPA is exercising that authority today. EPA divers determined that additional measures were necessary.

The PRP conducted similar repairs in December 2015.

The EPA proposed long-term remedy for the site has 150,000 cubic yards of waste removed and disposed of offsite. This would cost \$87 million and construction is estimated to take 19 months and about 13,300 truckloads to transport waste material to an off-site facility.

On Sept. 15, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt made a surprise visit to the San Jacinto River Waste Pits and vowed that the EPA would have a permanent solution for the site before the University of Texas and Oklahoma University football game on Oct. 14.

Pruitt said he would do what ever it takes to eliminate both the “ongoing risk and the crushing anxiety felt by thousands of Texans that live near the San Jacinto Waste Pits.”

For more than four decades, the San Jacinto River Waste Pits, which were used as a site to dispose of paper mill sludge by Champion Paper, have plagued the San Jacinto River. Containing mercury, PCBs, furans and cancer-causing dioxins, the waste pits have sat in the river with a temporary armored cap since 2011 that was installed to prevent any release of toxins from the site.

For more information visit www.epa.gov/tx/sjrwps.